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16 October 1965

BRIEFING NOTES  
FOR DCI

INDONESIA

(MAP, INDONESIA)

- I. In Indonesia, President Sukarno and the army are continuing to maneuver for position in the aftermath of the left wing coup attempt of September 30th.
  - A. There are now essentially two governments in Indonesia. One is headed by Sukarno, and the other consists of the top army leadership. These two factions are competing for power, but for the moment they need each other. They also fear that there will be civil war if they come to outright and open opposition.
    1. The army needs Sukarno's name and his unifying influence to consolidate its position, and particularly to control the political situation in central Java, where the Communists have accumulated considerable strength.
    2. Sukarno, for his part, appears reluctant to face up to the army leaders until he

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can rehabilitate the Indonesian Communists  
as a strong and acceptable base of support.

B. Sukarno's announcement that he has appointed  
Major General Suharto commander of the army is  
a definite plus for the army.

1. Suharto led the army's countermoves against  
the September 30 coup attempt. He was the  
army's choice to replace the assassinated  
General Yani.

2. Sukarno wanted to name a general who would  
take a "softer" line against the Indonesian  
Communist Party--the PKI. The army leaders  
agreed to insist on Suharto, and the Pres-  
ident apparently yielded to strong army  
pressure.

II. The army is riding high and going its own way,  
regardless of Sukarno's announcements that he will  
decide what should be done about the coup attempt.  
The generals are continuing their repressive cam-  
paign against the PKI and its front organizations.

A. Most Moslem and other anti-PKI political or-  
ganizations and youth groups, encouraged by the  
army, have continued to demonstrate against the  
PKI. They are calling for the abolition of the

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party. Mobs have sacked virtually every party installation in Djakarta.

B. The army itself has arrested several top Communists and perhaps as many as 2,000 PKI and PKI front members suspected of complicity in the coup attempt. There are reports that 74 have already been executed. D.N. Aidit, chairman of the PKI, who has been hiding since the coup attempt, was reportedly arrested in central Java on October 14 and brought to Djakarta for interrogation. No confirmation of this report has been received as yet, however.

C. The PKI's underground structure no doubt remains intact, but the overt apparatus and the party's communications are in obvious disarray.

III. The Army leadership appears to be determined to resist Sukarno's attempt to paper over the September 30th coup attempt and to return to the political situation which existed before that incident.

A. Sukarno and his chief lieutenant, Foreign Minister Subandrio, have been issuing statements designed to dampen the army offensive against the PKI and regain control of the situation.

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1. Sukarno has stated that "peace and tranquility" are needed so that he may solve what he says is now a "political rather than a military problem."
2. Recent reports indicate that Sukarno may be willing to sacrifice the PKI and its top leaders in order to placate the army. Sukarno is reportedly considering the establishment of a "national" Communist party to replace the PKI which now is being attacked by the anti-Communists as an instrument of the Chinese Communists.

B. Top army generals apparently believe that Sukarno himself approved the coup attempt as a means of reducing the army's ability to oppose the Communists, but had not intended the murder of the generals.  agree with this account, but so far we have no positive proof of Sukarno's complicity.

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1. There is, however, no doubt that the PKI was involved in the plot at an early stage. Communist paramilitary personnel, trained by the Indonesian air force, were responsible for the brutal murders of the six army generals.

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C. Some of the army leaders apparently consider the present situation to be their last chance to take decisive action against the PKI. They feel that unless firm action is taken now, Indonesia will inevitably slide into Communism.

1. Although the army's specific plans are not known, one report indicates that the army will try to get along with Sukarno without relaxing its present drive against the PKI and allied leftist parties. They hope that eventually Sukarno would have to accept the new political balance or step down.

IV. It is questionable, however, whether the army will be able to outmaneuver Sukarno.

A. The political leadership of the army, never strong, has been significantly weakened by the death of six of its top generals.

B. Sukarno remains the symbol of Indonesian national independence and pride for the masses of people. In a showdown between Sukarno and the army leaders, many army units would not oppose a direct order from Sukarno. A total repression of the PKI by the army would almost certainly require Sukarno's acquiescence--which is highly unlikely--or his enforced silence.

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V. For the immediate future, however, President Sukarno's position as unchallenged boss has been weakened, and Indonesian Communists should remain on the defensive for some time.

A. Medical evidence is that Sukarno does not have long to live. On the important question of who will take control when he dies, the events of the past 20 days have significantly improved the prospects for the army, and correspondingly reduced the chances of a Communist take-over.

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